

Marine Safety Office Houston-Galveston
Marine Safety Unit Galveston
Vessel Traffic Service Houston

Marine Safety Information Bulletin 08-04

Reporting Illness and Deaths on Vessels
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International shipping is one of the most efficient means of getting cargo from one end of the earth to the other. It also has the potential to be a very efficient means of transmitting disease from one country to another, if proper reporting measures are not observed. As the SARS epidemic demonstrated last year, a sick person can cause a disease to leap from shore to distant shore if left undiagnosed and untreated. The Coast Guard is working with the U. S. Public Health Service (PHS) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to remind and educate the maritime community on the requirements for reporting death and illnesses for foreign passengers and crewmembers.

The regulations for the U. S. Public Health Service are found in 42 CFR Parts 34 and 71. The Division of Quarantine under the agency is empowered to apprehend, detain, medically examine or conditionally release individuals suspected of having one of the following diseases:

Cholera or suspected Cholera
Plague
SARS

Diphtheria
Suspected Smallpox
Suspected Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers

Infectious Tuberculosis
Yellow Fever

Foreign Quarantine regulations require the death or illness of an arriving international passenger or crewmember to Texas be reported immediately to the Los Angeles Quarantine Station (a Quarantine Office will be opening in Houston in November 2004) by phone at (310) 215-2365 or fax at (310) 215-2285.

For the purpose of the reporting requirements, a person is considered ill when signs or symptoms of the following are met:

- Temperature of 100F (38C) or greater, which is accompanied by one or more of the following: rash, jaundice, glandular swelling, or which has persisted for 2 days or more.
- Diarrhea severe enough to interfere with normal activity or work (3 or more loose stools within 24 hours or a greater number than normal number of loose stools).

A mariner is not expected to be a medical expert, therefore any of the above symptoms should be immediately reported for evaluation by the Quarantine Office to assist in early identification and isolation of any illness that may pose a threat to the health and safety of other crewmembers.



RICHARD M. KASER
Captain, U. S. Coast Guard
Captain of the Port/Officer in Charge Marine Inspection